**DOC XVIII, n. 142 (COM(2016) 157)**

On 26 July 2016 the Senate Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agrifood Production adopted a positive opinion with the following qualifications:

1. some parameters that are deemed to be distinctive of fertiliser quality are oversimplified with respect to the provisions of Italian legislation;
2. member countries should be allowed to adopt stricter rules for the marketing of some products, held to be non-compliant with environmental regulations in the receiving country.

The Committee also recommended the following actions:

1. the present European legislation on sewage sludge from waste water or treatment and use of manure should be used as a model in the agricultural sector;
2. revise the upper limit (to be set at 80 mg/kg) and the timing for the reduction in cadmium contents for both organo-mineral and inorganic fertilisers;
3. develop appropriate policies to support R&D investment in environmental protection, so as to ensure the sustainability of cadmium and chemical residue removal from soil;
4. repeal the constraints on the use of important organic matrix of fossil origin (peat, lignite, etc);
5. introduce a more exhaustive and detailed list for the category of microbial plant biostimulants;
6. clarify the relation between fertiliser regulation and waste regulation;
7. adopt a transitional mechanism to monitor new fertilisers marketed under an EC label in default of relevant methods of analysis;
8. mention should be made of Commission regulation EC No 889/2008 of 5 September 2008 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of Council regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products with regard to organic production, labelling and control;
9. regulate technological additives, e.g. anti caking agents and dyes;
10. harmonize and raise from 50 to 100 mg/kg the cap on nickel in organic soil improvers;
11. develop guidelines on conformity assessment procedures;
12. ensure traceability through detailed labelling of substances used in the production of organic fertilisers.

On 20 July 2016, the Senate Standing Committee on Environment, Environmental Properties and the Land passed a favourable opinion. The committee endorsed the qualifications submitted by the Agriculture Committee and recommended the following :

1. anaerobic digestion plants for biogas production from manure should be classified as renewable energy production plants;
2. the definition of organic soil improvers should be improved and the draft regulation should also include a list of by-products from the food and agrifood industry, as is the case in Italian legislation;
3. this control strategy should be enlarged so as to include all businesses involved in the production of EC-labelled fertilisers.

On 18 May 2016, the EU Policies Committee adopted a positive opinion, noting that the proportionality principle is not fully complied with. In addition to the qualifications expressed by the Agriculture Committee, the Committee stressed the need to consider climate and soil differences amongst EU countries, in order to ensure the sustainability of agricultural sectors, with their different fertilisation requirements. For this purpose, Article 3 of the proposal should include provisions enabling member States to develop their own soil fertilisation programmes, notwithstanding the compliance of such programmes with mandatory rules on which fertilisers may be used in the various regions, in what quantities and in what types of soil.